



## **Legislative Bulletin.....June 26, 2001**

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**H. RES. 166—Recognizing the outstanding and invaluable disaster relief assistance provided by individuals, organizations, businesses, and other entities to the people of Houston, Texas, and surrounding areas during the devastating flooding caused by tropical storm Allison. (Jackson-Lee)**

**Order of Business:** The concurrent resolution will be considered under suspension of the rules on Tuesday, June 26, 2001.

**Summary:** This month's tropical storm Allison brought catastrophic flooding to Houston, TX and surrounding areas; and took the lives of 21 people. The resolution notes that this natural disaster injured countless people, uprooted families, and devastated businesses and institutions.

***The resolution also states that, "Texas has been declared a Federal disaster area, and individuals and families in 28 Texas counties are eligible for Federal assistance" and resolves that the House recognizes a number of individuals, organizations, and government entities that assisted in relief efforts.***

**Cost to Taxpayers:** None.

**Constitutional Authority:** A committee report citing constitutional authority is unavailable.

**Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules:** No, it is a nonbinding resolution.

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## **H.R. 2213— Crop Year 2001 Agricultural Economic Assistance Act (Combest [*Boehner-Stenholm Substitute*])**

**Order of Business:** The bill is scheduled to be considered under a motion to suspend the rules on Tuesday, June 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Summary:** H.R. 2213 as reported to the floor (the Boehner-Stenholm Substitute) is a **\$5.5 billion** crop assistance package for agricultural producers for FY2001. This level of assistance stays within the amounts authorized for FY2001 by the Budget Resolution, and is \$1 billion less than Chairman Combest's original bill.

What follows is the crop assistance that would be provided, as compared to last year:

<u>Crop</u>	<u>Last Year</u>	<u>H.R 2213</u>
Supplemental market loss assistance to eligible farms	\$5.457 billion	\$4.622 billion
Oilseeds (e.g. soybeans)	\$500 million	\$423.5 million
Peanuts	\$64 million	\$54.2 million
Tobacco	\$340 million	\$129.0 million
Wool and mohair	\$20 million	\$16.94 million
Cottonseed	\$100 million	\$84.7 million
Specialty crops (base grants to all states)	\$0	\$26 million
Specialty crops (grants based on specialty crop production levels)	\$0	\$133 million
Commodity assistance	\$0	\$10 million
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6.481 billion</b>	<b>\$5.499 billion</b>

All funds in H.R. 2213 would have to be spent by September 30, 2001.

**Additional Background:** “Supplemental market loss assistance to eligible farms” goes to individuals receiving “Freedom to Farm” payments under the Agriculture Market Transition Act to make up for low market prices in the current crop year. “Specialty crops” provisions are given to the states as block grants. Base grants are given to every state plus Puerto Rico to

promote agriculture. Additional grants are then given on varying levels to states based on their actual production of “specialty crops” (basically any crop besides the core crops of wheat, peanuts, rice, etc.). “Commodity assistance” is for the costs of processing, transporting, and distributing commodities.

**Cost to Taxpayers**: A CBO cost estimate confirms that H.R. 2213 would cost taxpayers **\$5.5 billion** this year in mandatory spending.

**Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?** Yes. Though most of this bill would fund programs that have been funded in the past, the bill also creates several new block grants to the states for specialty crops and commodities assistance.

**Constitutional Authority**: A committee report citing constitutional authority is unavailable.

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